

Message Text

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ACTION CU-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PA-02 PRS-01 MMO-04 INR-07 /031 W
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R 191107Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO USIA WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 0501

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 12100

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SECSTATE FOR CU

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: PRESS COMMENT ON "200 YEARS OF AMERICAN
PAINTING"

1. THUS FAR, NEARLY 50 ARTICLES HAVE APPEARED REPORTING
AND/OR COMMENTING ON THIS EXHIBIT, AND MORE ARE EXPECTED.
TO MANY, THE EXHIBIT WAS SOMETHING IN THE NATURE OF A
DISCOVERY. THE EXHIBIT "FILLS AN INFORMATION GAP ABOUT
AMERICAN ART", ONE CRITIC OBSERVED, AND A NUMBER OF LONG
AND DETAILED ARTICLES PROCEED TO DO SO WITH THEIR
REVIEWS. ANOTHER ARTICLE, WITH SURPRISE, NOTES THAT
THERE REALLY IS A HISTORY OF ART IN THE UNITED STATES,
AS THE EXHIBIT SHOWS; ANOTHER DESCRIBES IT AS A WAY TO
UNDERSTANDING OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN ART. STILL
ANOTHER COMMENTS THAT THIS SHOW DEMONSTRATES HOW AMERI-
CAN ART DEVELOPED FROM ITS DEPENDENCY ON EUROPE (A THEME
APPEARING IN OTHER REVIEWS AS WELL) TO THE REVERSE WHERE
"EUROPE BECOMES A CULTURAL PROVINCE OF THE UNITED
STATES". A NUMBER OF ARTICLES AND REVIEWS STRESS THE
UNIQUE CHARACTER OF THE EXHIBIT, POINTING OUT THAT
NOTHING LIKE IT HAS BEEN SEEN IN EUROPE BEFORE. A NOTE
OF SATISFACTION APPEARS IN MANY THAT THE EXHIBIT IS
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FIRST TO BE SEEN IN THE FRG.

2. DIE ZEIT, THE MOST IMPORTANT WEEKLY NEWSPAPER IN THIS COUNTRY, SAID THE EXHIBIT SHOWS "THE ASTOUNDING DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN ART," NOTING THAT THESE 60 PAINTINGS REPRESENT "THE NICEST, MOST IMPORTANT EVENT MARKING THE BICENTENNIAL IN GERMANY." THE PAPER SAID THE PAINTINGS WERE DISPLAYED "WITH WIT AND INTELLIGENCE." IN A SIMILAR VEIN, THE FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG, PROBABLY THE MOST INFLUENTIAL NEWSPAPER IN THE FRG, SAID THAT "THE ART LOVER (IN GERMANY) IS DRAWING PARTICULAR BENEFIT FROM THE BIRTHDAY OF THE UNITED STATES," ADDING THAT "FOR THE FIRST TIME AMERICAN ART IS PRESENT IN PICTURE-BOOK FASHION", AND NEUE RUHR ZEITUNG (ESSEN) SPOKE OF "AN IMPORTANT, INFORMATIVE EXHIBIT...BEARING ALL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EXTRAORDINARY." VORWAERTS, THE PRINCIPAL NEWSPAPER OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY, SAID THE EXHIBIT IS "IMPRESSIVELY SUCCESSFUL" IN PRESENTING A REPRESENTATIVE SELECTION OF ONE ASPECT OF AMERICAN CULTURAL LIFE. ARTIS, AN IMPORTANT ART MAGAZINE, PRAISED THE HIGH QUALITY OF THE PAINTINGS, POINTING OUT THAT "A REPETITION OF THIS SORT OF EXHIBIT CAN, FOR VARIOUS REASONS, HARDLY BE EXPECTED, AT LEAST NOT IN THIS CENTURY." BONN'S EXPRESS CARRIED THE HEADLINE "THE ART SHOW OF THE YEAR" AND THE WEST-FAELISCHE RUNDSCHAU DESCRIBED THE EXHIBIT AS THE WORK OF "A GREAT, ARTISTIC, PRODUCTIVE CONTINENT." THE WESTDEUTSCHE ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG, GERMANY'S BIGGEST REGIONAL NEWSPAPER, SAID THE EXHIBIT WAS ORGANIZED "WITH GREAT PRUDENCE," AND

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AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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HANDELSBLATT, THE MOST IMPORTANT BUSINESS/ECONOMIC PUBLICATION IN THE FRG, SPOKE POSITIVELY OF "THE BROAD SPECTRUM OF AMERICAN PAINTING" AS DEMONSTRATED BY THE 60 PAINTINGS ON DISPLAY.

3. GIVEN THE FACT THAT EUROPEAN ART CRITICS TEND TO GET RATHER SNIDE WHEN IT COMES TO AMERICAN CULTURE, IT IS BOTH SURPRISING AND WELCOME THAT SO LITTLE OF IT APPEARED IN THE COVERAGE. NONE WAS REALLY NEGATIVE, AND ONLY FOUR ARTICLES CARPED, FOR EXAMPLE ABOUT THE RELATIVE SMALL SIZE OF THE EXHIBIT, CONTENDING THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO TRACE 200 YEARS OF PAINTING THROUGH 60 WORKS. "AS A HISTORICAL ART REVIEW, OR AS A PRESENTATION OF THE AESTHETIC DEVELOPMENT OF A COUNTRY, IT IS TOO FRAGMENTED, TOO CASUALLY PUT TOGETHER," WROTE THE RHEINISCHE POST. THE STUTTGARTER ZEITUNG SAID: "FOR THIS COMMEMORATIVE EVENT, SUBSIDIZED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, OUR BEST THANKS, BUT 200 YEARS OF AMERICAN PAINTING DESERVE MORE THAN A 'PAINTER'S DIGEST', EVEN A WELL-EDITED ONE."

4. THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM, THE AGENCY AND THE MISSION CAN BE SATISFIED THAT THE MEDIA COVERAGE -- ELECTRONIC AS WELL AS PRINT -- HAS DONE SUCH A NICE JOB OF
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PURVEYING POSITIVE INFORMATION ABOUT AMERICAN CULTURE TO A VERY MUCH LARGER PUBLIC THAN CAN SEE THE EXHIBIT ITSELF. WE HAD HOPED FOR THIS, AND ARE GLAD IT HAS COME ABOUT.

5. CLIPPINGS FOLLOW BY POUCH.
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